

B1
amend

a reference orifice, means for directing gas from the fuel tank to said reference orifice, means for determining the time required for the pressure within the fuel tank to decay, between predetermined pressure levels, through any leaks which might exist in the fuel tank and the time required for the pressure within the fuel tank to decay, between predetermined pressure levels, through the combination of any leaks which might exist in the fuel tank and said reference orifice when said means for directing gas from the fuel tank to said reference orifice is actuated, and means for comparing said times determined by said time determining means with predetermined time relationships.

Please amend claim 9 as follows:

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9. (Twice Amended) A method for testing a fuel tank comprising the steps of:

- a) Pressurizing the fuel tank by utilizing an external source of pressure;
- b) Allowing pressure within the fuel tank to stabilize at a predetermined first pressure;
- c) Actuating a timer when said pressure within the fuel tank has stabilized at said predetermined first pressure;
- d) Allowing gas from the fuel tank to decay through any leaks which might exist in the fuel tank until a predetermined second pressure has been reached;
- e) Storing the elapsed time on the timer; and

- f) Comparing said elapsed time on the timer with a predetermined time for said pressure decay to determine whether the fuel tank has an acceptable leakage rate.

[Please amend claim 10 as follows:]

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10. (Twice Amended) The method as defined in claim 9 further including, after step f), the following steps:

- g) Repressurizing the fuel tank by utilizing an external source of pressure;
- h) Allowing pressure within the fuel tank to stabilize at said predetermined first pressure;
- i) Actuating said timer when said pressure within the fuel tank has stabilized at said predetermined first pressure;
- j) Allowing gas from the fuel tank to pass through the combination of any leaks which might exist in the fuel tank and a reference orifice until a predetermined third pressure has been reached;
- k) Storing the elapsed time on the timer and stopping gas flow through said reference orifice;
- l) Repressurizing the fuel tank by utilizing the external source of pressure;
- m) Allowing pressure within the fuel tank to stabilize at said predetermined first pressure;

- B2 could
- n) Actuating said timer when said pressure within the fuel tank has stabilized at said predetermined first pressure;
 - o) Allowing gas from the fuel tank to decay through any leaks which might exist in the fuel tank until said predetermined third pressure has been reached;
 - p) Storing the elapsed time on the timer; and
 - q) Comparing the ratio of the stored time in step p) with the stored time in step k) against a predetermined standard ratio to determine whether the fuel tank under test has an acceptable leakage rate.
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Please add the following new claim:

- B3
11. A method for testing a fuel tank comprising the steps of:
- a) Pressurizing the fuel tank by utilizing an external source of pressure;
 - b) Allowing pressure within the fuel tank to stabilize at a predetermined first pressure;
 - c) Actuating a timer when said pressure within the fuel tank has stabilized at said predetermined first pressure;
 - d) Allowing gas from the fuel tank to pass through the combination of any leaks which might exist in the fuel tank and a reference orifice until a predetermined second pressure has been reached;

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- e) Storing the elapsed time on the timer and stopping gas flow through said reference orifice;
 - f) Repressurizing the fuel tank by utilizing the external source of pressure;
 - g) Allowing gas within the fuel tank to stabilize at said predetermined first pressure;
 - h) Actuating said timer when said pressure within the fuel tank has stabilized at said predetermined first pressure;
 - i) Allowing gas from the fuel tank to decay through any leaks which might exist in the fuel tank until said predetermined second pressure has been reached;
 - j) Storing the elapsed time on the timer; and
 - k) Comparing the ratio of the stored time in step e) with the stored time in step j) against a predetermined standard ratio to determine whether the fuel tank has an acceptable leakage rate.
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REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above application is respectfully requested in view of the present Amendment. The Official Action, mailed August 22, 2002, has been carefully reviewed. By this Amendment, claims 1, 9 and 10 have been amended and new independent claim 11 has been added to this case.